

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 02437 281558Z

43

ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T ATHENS 2437

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, MOPS, TU, GR, US

SUBJ: POSSIBILITY OF TURKISH PREEMPTIVE ACTION

REF: ANKARA 2454

1. TURKISH HINTS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF "PREEMPTIVE" MILITARY ACTION AGAINST GREECE STRIKE US AS BOTH DANGEROUS AND DISINGENUOUS. WE HAVE SEEN NO RPT NO INDICATION WHATSOEVER THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAS THE INTENTION OR INDEED THE CAPABILITY OF TAKING ANY EFFECTIVE MILITARY INITIATIVE AGAINST TURKEY. THE LAST GREEK GOVERNMENT TO BRANDISH THE SWORD IN THIS WAY COLLAPSED LAST SUMMER AND GREECE IS STILL LIVING WITH THE CONSEQUENCES.

2. TURKISH MILITARY SUPERIORITY IN NUMBERS AND FIREPOWER IS ABSOLUTE AND LIKELY TO REMAIN SO. THIS IS NOT ONLY A QUESTION OF NUMBERS (TURKEY--500,000 MEN; GREECE--160,000 MEN) BUT ALSO OF ARMAMENTS, EQUIPMENT AND MILITARY CAPABILITIES IN GENERAL. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, IT IS THE VERY IMBALANCE EXISTING BETWEEN THE GREEK AND TURKISH ARMED FORCES WHICH MOST CONCERNS PM CARAMANLIS AND DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF. AND IN OUR JUDGMENT HERE, WORKING WITH THE GREEK MILITARY, WE DO NOT

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PAGE 02 ATHENS 02437 281558Z

BELIEVE THAT THIS IMBALANCE IS SOMETHING THAT CAN BE REVERSED

EVEN OVER A PERIOD OF TIME WITHOUT A FAR GREATER LEVEL OF
MILITARY AID TO GREECE THAN IS AT PRESENT CONTEMPLATED. EVEN
THEN GREECE WOULD NEVER MATCH TURKEY IN TROOP STRENGTH.

3. WHAT GREEK LEADERS, INCLUDING CARAMANLIS AND AVEROFF, HAVE
MADE CLEAR IS THAT SHOULD TURKEY TAKE SOME AGGRESSIVE OR
PROVOCATIVE ACTION IN THE AEGEAN, THEY WOULD FIGHT THE TURKS
REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES. BUT THERE IS CLEARLY NO RPT
NO GREEK DESIRE TO TAKE ANY INITIATIVE IN THIS AREA, NOR ANY
GREEK ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME WERE HOSTILITIES
TO BREAK OUT.

KUBISCH

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